



Knox County and the City of Knoxville's Community Strategy for Phased Reopening Frequently Asked Questions

For more information...

1. Where can I find Knox County and the City of Knoxville's Community Strategy for Phased Reopening, Phases One and Two? Go to

<https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/reopening.html>

2. How can I file a complaint about a business not following the phased reopening plan? For complaints about hotels, pools, day care centers, grocery stores, restaurants and bars, contact Knox County Health Department's Environmental Health division at 215-5200 or environmental@knoxcountyttn.org.

For complaints about all other business types, call 311 (or 215-4311).

What are the most important things I can do as an individual or a business/organization to reduce the spread of COVID-19?

There are five core actions we must all consistently take:

- Physical distancing at least 6 feet from others not in your household
- Wearing cloth face coverings
- Proper handwashing
- Cleaning surfaces
- Staying home if you are sick or instructed to isolate/quarantine

I own a business/lead a community organization and would like to sign up for the Knox County Health Department's COVID-19 listserv. What should I do?

Go to <https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/reopening-businesses.html>, scroll halfway down and click the "Listserv Registration" button.

How do I know if my cloth face covering is adequate? Is there a test to find out?

Cloth face coverings should:

- Fit snugly against the side of the face
- Be secured with ties or ear loops
- Include multiple layers of fabric
- Allow for breathing without restriction
- Be able to be washed and machine or air dried without damage or changing shape

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>)

Why did the length of Knox County's reopening phases change from a minimum of 28 days?

The minimum length of phases in Knox County has been modified based on a better understanding of the local burden of disease and improved capacity to respond. Phases will no longer be a minimum of 28 days. Instead, the health department will assess the data after at least 14 days and provide an update, which may include adjustments to the guidelines or phases. The next update will be on June 12.





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Is there a public information line to call on weekends?

Yes, the Tennessee Department of Health is operating their phone line on weekends, 11 am to 5pm EST (in addition to weekday hours 11am to 9am EST). The number is 877-857-2945 or 833-556-2476. Knox County Health Department's public information line will no longer be available on weekends after May 24.

Do all food service workers need to wear gloves at all times while working?

No. The CDC recommends that food service workers wash their hands regularly with soap and water; minimize the handling of cash, credit cards and mobile devices; and practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/airport-retail-factsheet.html>)

Do I really need to wear a mask when I'm in public?

Yes, please wear a cloth face covering in public settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain consistently. Some people with COVID-19 will never have symptoms or know they are infected. Others can spread the virus for days before they feel sick. Wearing a cloth face covering helps trap the virus when infected people who don't feel sick speak, cough or sneeze. Cloth face coverings do not replace other protective measures. Knox County Health Department still recommends that you stay at least six feet away from other people (social distancing), wash your hands frequently, and avoid touching your face.

When can I be around others after having COVID-19, whether suspected or confirmed?

If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from other people. Staying away from others helps stop the spread of COVID-19. If you had symptoms of COVID-19, you can be with others after:

- 3 days with no fever **and**
- Symptoms improved **and**
- 10 days since symptoms first appeared

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms, you can be with others once 10 days have passed since your test. If you have been in close contact with a person with COVID-19, stay home for 14 days after exposure.

What guidelines should churches follow?

Faith-based guidance has been issued by the State of Tennessee and any questions about the guidance should be directed to the state. The guidance can be found here:

<https://covid.knoxcountyttn.gov/pdfs/House-of-Worship-Guidance-FBCI.pdf>





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What services are allowed at salons and spas?

See pages 13-14 of the [guidelines](#) for details. During Phase Two, salons and spas may offer any services if both the patron and the service provider are wearing face coverings the entire time. Surfaces and items must be sanitized between users. Open by appointment only, and seating for patrons must be at least 6 feet apart in service areas. Patrons cannot wait inside. Nail and pedicure stations must have plexiglass protective barriers to reduce contact between patron and service providers.

What are the guidelines for gatherings such as weddings, parties, funerals and large meetings?

See pages 27-28 of the Phase Two [guidelines](#) for details. Offer tele-participation options and other alternative participation models as much as possible. Gatherings are high-risk activities. According to the CDC, the virus [spreads easily between people](#), especially when they gather. Gatherings are high-risk activities because of the prolonged time spent in the vicinity of other participants and the increased likelihood of intermittent breaking of physical distancing. Across the nation, many clusters of cases have been traced back to weddings, funerals, house parties, athletic activities and workplace meetings. Following the guidance for gatherings will be important for preventing clusters in our community. Gatherings have a maximum of 50 people for the entire duration of the event. When at least six feet of physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained between attendees from different households, participants must wear face coverings. Professional event venues and organizers must provide a copy of the guidelines to clients.

Can gyms open in Phase Two?

Yes, see pages 15-16 of Phase Two [guidelines](#) for details. When at least 12 feet of physical distancing cannot be consistently maintained, both staff and patrons must wear cloth face coverings. As a precaution, 12 feet serves a doubling of the minimum for non-exercise physical distancing. Surfaces and items must be sanitized between users. Gyms should operate with staffed hours only. Guest use is not allowed. It is highly encouraged to offer classes via tele-instruction. Classes may be offered with either 1) physical distancing of at least 6 feet and all participants wearing cloth face coverings or 2) physical distancing of at least 12 feet and optional face coverings.

Can indoor leisure facilities open in Phase Two, like bowling alleys, climbing gyms, and trampoline parks?

Yes, see pages 17-18 of [Phase Two guidelines](#) for details. Employees at indoor leisure facilities are asked to treat every patron as though they are potentially infectious. When six feet of physical distancing cannot be maintained, staff and patrons must wear cloth face coverings. If participation is a form of exercise, patrons must wear cloth face coverings throughout the duration of the activity due to the varied surfaces and likelihood of breaking of physical distancing in these settings. Equipment must be sanitized between users, and communal items such as bowling balls must be provided by employees to patrons and cannot be available for patrons to self-serve.



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I can open under the State's plan, but not Knox County's plan. What plan do I follow?

Business owners must follow the guidance that is outlined in Knox County's [phased reopening plan](#) unless otherwise noted in the local plan. Examples of exceptions include medical offices and places of worship. The local plan provides guidance on how to slowly expand services beyond what was allowed during Governor Lee's Safer at Home Order.

What guidance is there for medical practices?

Healthcare settings should follow advice of their regulatory bodies, professional association, and state and federal governments. Governor Lee has stated that elective procedures can resume May 1st.

What guidance is there for dental offices?

Healthcare settings should follow the advice of their regulatory bodies, professional association, and state and federal governments. Governor Lee has stated that elective procedures can resume May 1st, and dental elective/routine procedures can resume May 6, at this time we do not have any further official guidance about dental offices. CDC guidance for Dental Offices can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings.html>

Our neighborhood has a pool and we plan to open during Phase Two. What signage should we post?

The Phase Two reopening [guidelines](#) link to the CDC website's guidance on [signage](#). (Look at the last bullet under the heading "Promoting Behaviors that Prevent the Spread of COVID-19.") Pool administrators are free to choose whichever signs they feel their community would benefit from seeing.

Is our neighborhood pool required to have a person present during hours of operation to clean and disinfect?

If public pools, splash pads, beaches and other water venues are not required to provide a lifeguard, then they are not required to provide someone at the pool to maintain safety protocols and cleaning during hours of operation. The pool facilities must still be cleaned and disinfected frequently. [CDC guidance](#) specifies at least daily cleaning and disinfecting of common touch surfaces, including bathrooms. It is up to the pool operator or management company to determine exactly how to facilitate the daily cleaning of the pool facility.

Can our adult sports league have games against other teams in Phase Two?

No, but you can have team-based practice. If six feet of physical distance can't be consistently maintained, please wear cloth face coverings. Athletic fields, courts and other athletic venues are available for single household use and for skill-building drills, conditioning and team-based practice (defined as lower-risk activities by CDC). We recommend athletic programs and activities for all ages follow the [CDC guidance on youth sports](#). There is a maximum allowable number of 50 people for a gathering at one time (including athletes, coaches and spectators).

